Understanding Deaf Cultures Around the World

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FULL INCLUSION WITH SIGN LANGUAGE!

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THEME: FULL INCLUSION WITH SIGN LANGUAGE!

International Week of the Deaf 2017 takes place under the theme “Full Inclusion with Sign Language”. It is in tandem with the 3rd International Conference of the World Federation of the Deaf and believes that full social inclusion of deaf people is possible when sign language is recognised and used widely within the society.

International Week of the Deaf 2017 stresses the importance of sign language. Without the actual recognition, facilitation and promotion of it, the rights outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the recently adopted 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals cannot be fully achieved.

CAMPAIGN KEY MESSAGES

BIRTH RIGHT
Draws upon the principle of basic human rights in relation to language acquisition at birth. When acquired last, it enables deaf children to have full communication with people, improving their cognitive and social skills. Deaf children need access to sign language from birth.

EQUAL LANGUAGE
Recognises sign language as a valid linguistic means of conveying thoughts, ideas, and emotions. It is a fully operating language with its own syntax, morphology and structure. It fulfills all features to define the notion of a language. This has been confirmed in many systematic linguistic research on sign language since the late 1970s.

DEAF IDENTITY
Identifies deaf people as belonging to a cultural and linguistic community, who use sign language as a mother tongue or natural language to communicate.

ACCESSIBILITY
Stresses that deaf people need access to public information and services via sign language interpreting, subtitling, and/or close-captioning. A key factor to accessibility for public services such as health care, employment, social welfare or any other government services is provision of and access to sign language.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
Sign language competency for communication and provision of interpreters mean that deaf people can do almost any job. It is important for deaf people to equally aspire securing jobs that reflect their interest and competency. The main barriers to employment arise from inaccessible work environments rather than an inability to hear.

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BILINGUAL EDUCATION
Urge stakeholders to accept the need for bilingual education for a deaf child and to understand how quality bilingual education should be provided in a sign language environment. Bilingual education is a social-cultural approach of using sign language as the language of instruction in all subjects with a parallel strong emphasis on teaching reading and writing of the language used in the country or society.

EQUAL PARTICIPATION
Deaf people need to have equal access of participation in personal, public and political area as every other citizen. More importantly, it is necessary to ensure that deaf people have the opportunity to take up leadership roles, so that deaf people themselves can appropriately advocate for their rights and be involved in all decision-making processes concerning their lives. This is a reflection of the slogan: Nothing About Us Without Us.

LIFELONG LEARNING
Access to education, vocational training, and ongoing professional training and development, is key to gaining and retaining a job and earning a wage that allows independent living.
Is American Sign Language Universal?

• Approximately 300 signed languages used around the world
• Sign languages around the world
• International Sign Language
• World Federation of the Deaf
• Visual-Gestural language
Deaf Culture in Sweden

• Deaf Population - 1% of Sweden’s total population
• Deaf Schools - Elementary, Secondary, Post-Secondary
  - First deaf school opened in 1967
  - Schools allowed to use sign language in 1981

Explanation of Schools

• Orebro, Sweden - European Capital of Sign Language named in 2010
  - 10% of population are sign language users
  - Swedish Sign Language 2nd most used language
• Advanced Technology for the Deaf
SVENSKA HANDALFABETET
Deaf Culture in Palestine

• Deaf Population-3% of total population, 15% in some areas
• Inherited prelingual deafness
• Deaf Schools in the West Bank
• Perspectives of deafness
• Palestinian Sign Language
Deaf Culture in Brazil

• Deaf Population—approximately 5% of the total population
• Subcultures for Deaf/deaf
• LIBRAS used in schools—2005
• Types of schools—public vs. bilingual
• Technology for the Deaf
Deaf Culture in Ukraine

• Ukrainian Society of the Deaf began 1933
• Member of World Federation of the Deaf
• Ukrainian Sign Language used in schools-2006
• Interpreter Training